

2019 YEAR BOOK



Webb Ellis Southdowns

Est. 2008



**Inaugural Southdown Winner
Eblex Most Improved Flock Award**

Flock Competition 2017

Runner Up Class A and
Miller Hallett Trophy (Ewe Lambs)

Flock Competition 2015

Winner Class C Frank Grantham Trophy



Spratton Wren SB M56181

A very very traditional ram



East Dean Charlemagne M55707

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The Webb Ellis flock has something for everyone. From the commercial farmer after a high EBV terminal sire to the smallholder looking for something tasty, docile and good looking. Established in 2008, stock has been bought in from some of the best flocks in the country and performance recording has helped identify the best progeny.

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Patrick Goldsworthy MBE

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patrick@goldsworthy-uk.com

From the Chairman

It gives me great pleasure to welcome you to the Southdown Sheep Society 2019 Year Book.

There can be no doubt that the future of the farming sector is set to change in the post-Brexit era, with future agricultural policy much more focussed on environmental outcomes than productivity.

Farming businesses and all those allied with the industry will have to be leaner and fitter in future if they are to succeed.

Farmers will yet again have to look at costs of production, particularly in the livestock sector and those who produce a consistently high quality product, from a low cost of production base will thrive in the post Brexit brave new world.

The Southdown sheep has its part to play in this changing world. The breed can be found the length and breadth of the country and are capable of producing the highest quality lamb whether used in a large-scale commercial system, bred pure, or just enjoyed on a smaller scale by breed enthusiasts.

Whatever happens, our tough, thrifty and productive breed will be ready for the challenge. The diversity of genetics available within the breed is testament to the commitment of breeders to producing sheep suited to both their own needs and those of their customers.

The breed continues to grow and thrive and our regional groups and experienced breeders are happy to offer both help and advice to anyone thinking of starting their own flock, as is our friendly, knowledgeable and helpful breed society secretary Gail Sprake who can be contacted in her office.

With changing times ahead for the agricultural sector, I do believe that the Southdown breed is ready for whatever situation faces it in the coming years.



Adam Brown

Chairman of Council



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FIND A FLOCK NEAR YOU

If you would like more information about the breed, or details of local flocks, then please contact the Southdown Office.

Alternatively, there are regional Southdown Groups around the country. For more information, feel free to make contact with the breeders listed below.

South West Group

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South of England Group

Co-ordinator: **Paul Humphrey**
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2018 NATIONAL SOUTHDOWN SHOW

Southdown Champion goes all the way to the top at the 2018 National Southdown Show

The 2018 National Southdown Show took place at the Royal Three Counties Show in Malvern, Worcestershire and attracted breeders from a wide area.

Judge Paul Humphrey from East Dean, West Sussex, commented that it had been “a good show with a good line up of sheep in many of the classes”.

As his Champion Southdown, the judge selected an older ram, owned and exhibited by Jonathan Long.

The champion ram, Percheron, an imported senior ram bred in France by Benoit Poillot and used in both the Chaileybrook and Brant flocks, continued his success the following day when Interbreed judge Charles Sercombe selected him as the champion of the Terminal Sire Breeds, before crowning him the Supreme Interbreed Champion.

The National Show Reserve Champion was a shearling ewe bred and shown by Messrs Wakeham-Dawson & Harmer.

Winning the best ram lamb class was Johanna Miller from Redmarley, Gloucestershire. Ms Miller also took home the Challenge Cup for the best group of four sheep. The aged ewe class and the ewe lamb class were won by Mrs E Sargent.



President Mrs Jane Ing with Jonathan Long and the National Show champion

2018 Southdown Sheep Society Flock Competition

The 2018 Flock Competition was won by the Ridings flock owned by Messrs Wakeham-Dawson & Harmer of Lewes, Sussex, with the Goodwood Flock taking the Reserve Champion Flock award.

Mrs Amy Readhead-Higgins' Sutherland Flock, based in Leiston, Suffolk, was the winner of Class B (Flock of 10-39 ewes).

First prize in the Novice Section was jointly shared by Ben & Katie Slack and L & J Trumper.

Judge Mrs Anne Lambert commented that she had seen considerable variation within the competition with flocks ranging from those containing French and New Zealand bloodlines, to those where breeders favoured the more traditional type of Southdown. She stressed the importance of ram selection and commented that since the ram is 'half the flock' then it is vital to select the very best.

**2019 Southdown Sheep Society
Annual General Meeting and Field Day
Saturday September 7th 2019
at The Barn, The Sheep Centre, Malvern, Worcestershire, WR13 6PH**

Southdown tups key to achieving the financial outcomes from commercial flock

Cost of production and profit margin are critical figures that Clive Pullin applies to each of the multiple enterprises that make up his farming business.

This means placing emphasis on margin per head for lambs produced by his 990-head sheep flock.

“Amongst other things, I’m a dairy farmer so everything comes down to margin,” admits Clive.

“My goal with the sheep is to receive an average of £71 a lamb after commission – in 2018 I averaged £71.50 for 3000.”

Using Southdown tups is key to achieving those outcomes.

“They are producing good numbers of lambs and we sell them swiftly, it’s a simple system and these lambs are earning the right money,” says Clive.

Committed to Southdowns

The sheep flock at Thatcham Pond Farm, Stowe, Buckinghamshire, was established in the 1970s. Southdown tups have been used for 25 years, a reason for their endurance is that the breed allows the family to market lambs all year around.

The Pullins were introduced to Southdowns by former breeder John Goode of Kites Hardwick, Rugby, Warwickshire.

Southdowns allow the Pullins to market lambs all year around



Southdown tups are key to achieving the financial outcomes Clive Pullin seeks from his commercial flock

Twenty-two Southdown rams, two Suffolks and a Charollais are now used for tupping the 800 Mule and 190 Suffolk-cross flock.

For many years, the Pullins have sourced tups from Southdown Sheep Society president Lesley Mead, among other breeders.

“The children scan the newspapers and magazines to see what our options are,” says Clive, who is married to Nancy and has three sons, George, Harry and Joseph. He describes his mother, Ena, as the sheep expert in the business.

Easy Lambing

Tups are turned in with the ewes in the last week of September, to lamb between February 20th and April 1st.



Clive Pullin favours Southdown lambs for their ease of finishing

“The Southdown is very easy lambing, last year we only had to assist half a dozen, if that,” Clive recalls.

Another reason why he favours the Southdown is because lambs need very little concentrates to finish.

Clive aims to sell between 400 and 600 lambs by July 1st, with 90% sold through Foscott Market, Buckingham, which operates on one of his farms, or at Thrapston, Northamptonshire.

Clive’s farm is adjacent to Silverstone race circuit and comprises of owned and rented land – 640 hectares (ha) belonging to the family, 190ha rented and 65ha farmed through other arrangements.

He returned to the family farm in 1995 after working in Australia for a number of years and later at Rugby livestock market and in the financial sector.

He has since continued to develop the family’s arable, dairy and sheep enterprises.

Dairy

The busy farm moved to robotic milking five years ago, but still requires nine full time employees working with Clive.

“Many farmers in the area gave up dairy cattle 10 years or more ago, but our soils are difficult for

continuous arable production without a supply of organic matter,” he says.

“I anticipated that if we lost the cattle our arable crops would suffer through loss of soil conditions due to lack of manure so we kept the cattle, but moved to robot milkers to save labour and increase our milk yields. We care for our soils and nurture them to get the best results.”

Eight robot milkers were installed with the 300-cow Holstein Friesian herd producing an annual milk yield average of 9000 litres.

A zero-grazing feeding system is in place to enable grass to remain a key part of the cows’ diet during housing. “I work on the assumption that we have a nine-month winter,” says Clive, who uses the sheep flock to manage the zero-grazing system.

He adopts the unusual approach of turning the flock onto emerging cereal crops, grazing all the winter cereal ground with sheep.

“I grow a nice crop and allow the sheep to graze some of them to the ground and to just take the tops off others,” he explains.

The sheep are then removed and slurry spread on the crop.

“It is quite a traditional approach, I am the odd ball doing it, but it suits me and the sheep numbers,” says Clive.

“And it doesn’t affect our crop yields, we get good yields from this system. Our lambing percentage is good and our cull rate is pretty good too so it works.”

Eighty per cent of the flock grazed rape until the beginning of January, a crop that will be harvested in August.

“We turned them onto oats and barley after the rape and will graze the wheat according to what it needs,” Clive explains.

Minimal feeding

With a sharp eye on cost of production, he only feeds concentrates to triplet-bearing ewes.

Twins are offered fodder beet two weeks before they lamb and the singles a week before lambing, when they are housed.

There is no long-term place in the flock for a ewe that produces a single lamb. “If a ewe is having a single she doesn’t stay in the flock,” Clive explains.

He keeps a young flock, drafting out for sale in-lamb singles or those with one lamb at foot.

Scanning percentage mostly averages 206% but, following challenging weather conditions in 2018, the flock scanned at 188% this year.

The sheep are also used to manage grass levels on Silverstone’s car parks and camping sites, land which Clive rents.

This land is unavailable for several weeks of the year when major motoring events take place, but providing camping adds a lucrative additional enterprise to the farm, particularly during the British Grand Prix.

“We need to keep the pastures nice and level for that, so we manage that with the sheep. We graze the fields up to the summer and then mow,” says Clive.

He also hosts more than 1000 sheep on winter tack, growing stubble turnips as part of their diet.

The complexity of the farming enterprise means that everything needs to be done by date – the flock for example is shorn between May 5th – 10th, ahead of silage making.

There have been many changes in agriculture since Clive returned to the farm a quarter of a century ago, but Southdowns continue to deliver on expectations, so he has no plans to change his breeding policy.

“As long as we can keep getting a supply of rams we will continue using the Southdown,” he says.



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BUCKLAND SOUTHDOWN



ESTABLISHED

The Buckland flock was established in 1994 with UK bloodlines and was moved from Buckinghamshire to the Welsh Borders in 2000. We are focused on breeding sheep to optimize size, performance and longevity.

PERFORMANCE RECORDED

The flock has been Signet performance recorded since 2011. This has enabled us to identify and select animals with both maternal and terminal sire traits. In 2015 the flock was the Signet most improved Southdown flock.

PRIZEWINNERS

- Male Champion Southdown Shropshire 2016
- Reserve Rare Breeds Champion Cheshire 2016
- Champion Southdown Anglesey 2016
- Reserve Southdown Champion Shropshire 2017
- Interbreed wool on the hoof Shropshire 2017
- Rare Breed Champion Oswestry 2017
- Reserve Native Breed Champion Llanfilyn 2017

FIT FOR PURPOSE

The flock grazes at 700ft on unimproved pasture and our flock needs to be fit and hardy. Buckland breeding stock has been sold to commercial farms and been the foundation of many pedigree flocks. Inspection always welcome.

CONTACT US

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Email: miriam@livestockwise.co.uk



Oakes Pedigrees



EST: 2012

Southdown Sheep & Beef Shorthorns



Flock Sires: All Saints Boris & Stoneridge Roy



In 2013 we purchased 10 Ewes from the Woodmans flock. We have never bought any more ewes in and now we currently have 52 females.

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A Lifetime of Southdowns

Alexandra Long treasures her earliest memories of bottle feeding lambs in the kitchen of the farmhouse she grew up in at Shoreham-by-Sea.

Her parents had a mixed farming enterprise, with the Chailey pedigree flock of Southdown sheep at its heart.

“I must have been five or six when I recall father coming in from the lambing sheds with lambs for me to feed,” she reminisces.

Now a grandmother, Alexandra is assuming a similar role in the sheep enterprise she has established with her own family. “It has gone full circle, when you are the youngest member of the family you do the bottle feeding and that is also the case when you are the oldest!” she laughs.

Her father died suddenly in 1991, but his influence in the sheep enterprise she shares with her son and daughter-in-law, Jonathan and Chrissie, and granddaughter, Sophie, lives on to this day because it includes the 35-ewe Chaileybrook flock, the culmination of 65 years of breeding by the family.



Frank Grantham

Continuity

Alexandra’s father was Frank Grantham, a respected Southdown breeder and long serving chairman of the Southdown Sheep Society. “When



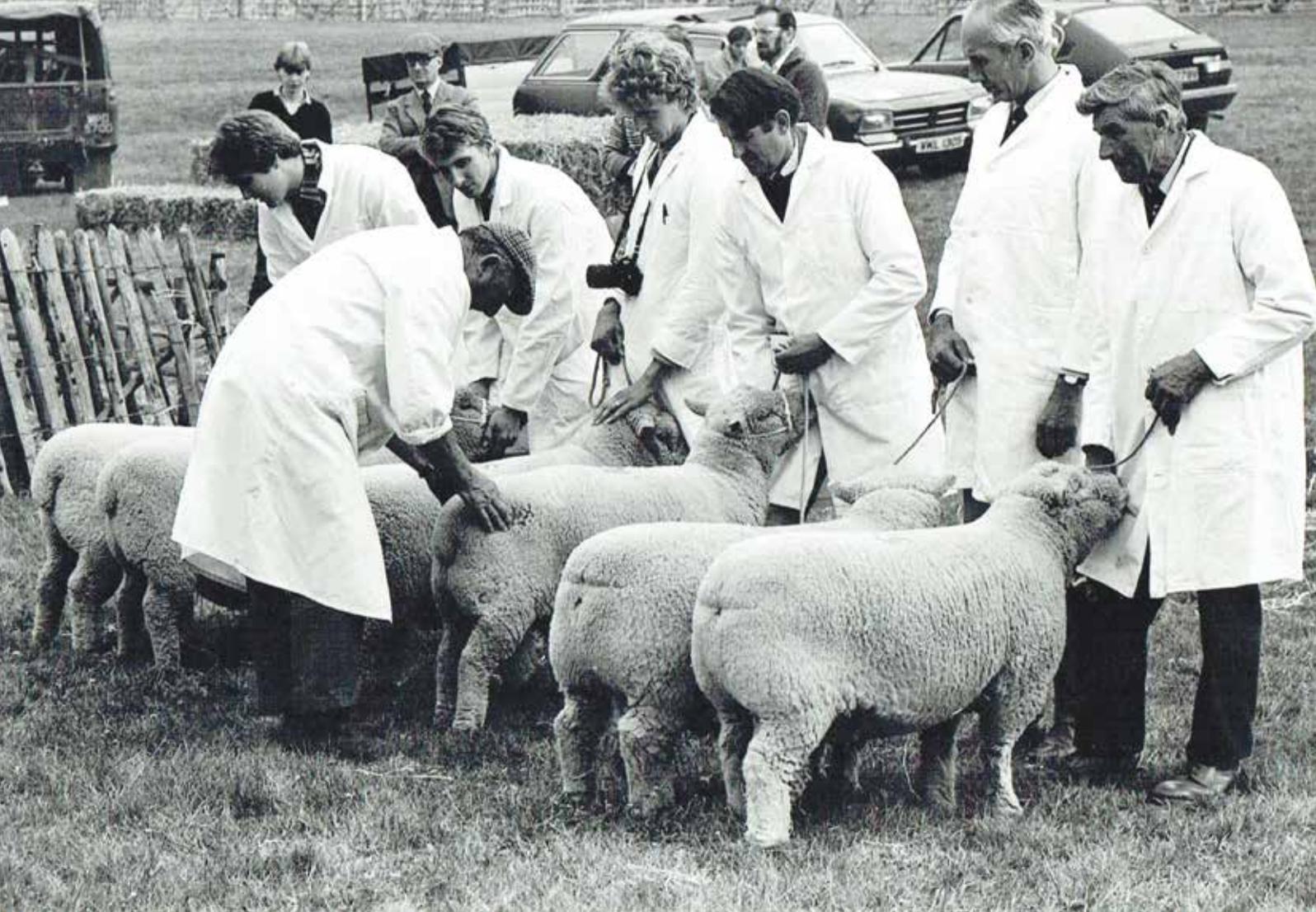
Alexandra Long, Southdown Sheep Society President 2012-2013, at the National Southdown Show

he died in 1991 we merged his Chailey flock with Jonathan’s recently formed Brook flock, giving continuity and maintaining the bloodlines my father had worked hard to develop,” she explains.

Frank had initially forged a career as a lecturer in agriculture, but his ambition was to farm. He achieved that goal after the Second World War ended. During the war he served with the 7th Armoured Division – the Desert Rats – and when he returned home he and his wife, Rhona, took on the tenancy of a small farm in Chailey, East Sussex.

They stocked it with 40 draft Southdown ewes purchased from the Ringmer and Ovingdean flocks.

“Father was a Sussex man and had always wanted to farm on the South Downs. The Southdown was the breed of that area, so it was natural fit for the farm,” says Alexandra.



Frank Grantham judging at Findon Fair in the early 1980s.

The Southdowns provided sires for Frank's commercial ewes, producing fat lambs to sell and for fatstock showing. "His love was the Southdown," she adds.

In 1958, the Granthams expanded their business when they became tenants of a larger farm, at Shoreham-by-Sea.

Farming beckoned too for Alexandra when she married and moved to Kent where her husband had a large-scale sheep enterprise stocked with Suffolks and Romneys.

But, with a lifelong connection to the Southdown breed, Alexandra has always maintained an interest in the breed and has been an active Society member, serving as a Council member and a former president.

Historic imports

"It is quite incredible to look at the position the Society and the breed is in now, with nearly 300 active flocks, considering back in 1967 there were just 43 registered flocks.

"That the breed is in the position it is, is testament

to the dedication of many breeders who stuck with the breed during the lean years and helped develop it with the use of different genetics from overseas," explains Alexandra.

A lot of breeders have the misconception that imported stock have only played an influence in recent years, she says. "In fact, French rams were being used in the early and mid-1960s, with New Zealand rams arriving in the UK in 1967.

"These genetics spread quickly through the breed at that time due to the small number of flocks and the need to expand the genepool. With such a small number of flocks their influence would be everywhere."

Reflecting on the family's own flock, Alexandra says a mix of genetics have played their part over the years, but the focus has always been on breeding a 'correct' Southdown, one that retains the characteristics of the breed, but delivers a viable commercial proposition by producing lean and long progeny. "It's what the market wants," she adds.

"We've been fortunate to develop the flock with a number of different bloodlines and continue

to do so in an effort to progress the breed and grow the market for Southdown rams. Jonathan regularly visits French flocks and we've imported a number of rams from France over the last 15 years all of which have had an impact on the flock and continue to do so through their progeny.

Flock development

"We don't import for the sake of it and Jonathan is very particular about the rams we buy whether in the UK or overseas and the costs involved in importing stock mean we have to be sure we're buying something which will add to the flock's development."

A good bloodline always breeds superior progeny and at times that means importing genetics, she points out. "Everyone has their own views on what the Southdown should look like, we mustn't forget the well recognised breed characteristics, but evolution of the breed is important too."

Capitalise on traits

Equally, when you look back at many of the

photographs from the late 1800s and early 1900s it is clear the Southdown was a cleaner headed sheep than many you see now and had plenty of size and scope, believes Alexandra.

Looking ahead, she believes breeders must capitalise on the Southdown's reputation as the perfect sire for a ewe lamb and for producing a good lamb carcass.

The shoulders of the Southdown are not as developed as many other breeds, so ease of lambing is there, she says.

"Additionally, the lamb doesn't take too much out of the ewe lamb before it is weaned so it gives her time to grow further.

"What is really great about the breed though is the mix of people you find among the Society's membership. It is a friendly Society and one I have always enjoyed being involved with.

"Like any breed Society the Southdown Sheep Society is a broad church and the breed has something for everyone, no matter what their reasons for owning sheep."

Alex's granddaughter Sophie is the fourth generation of the family to be involved with the breed, following the foundation of her own Littlebrook flock last year.



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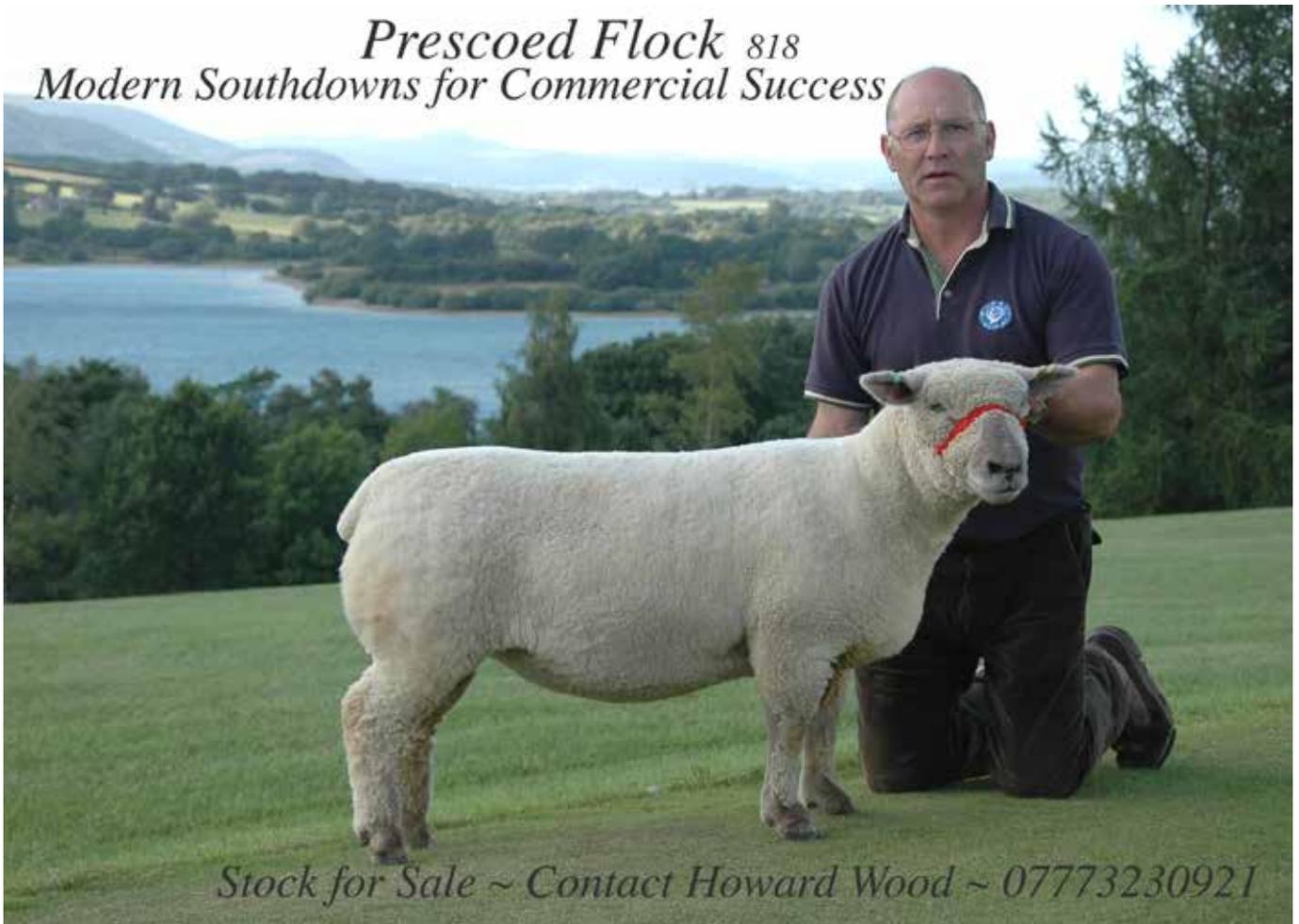
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<p>Hareley flock 871 Gillian Herbert Linley Green, Herefordshire 01886 884362 gillian@hareleyfarm.co.uk</p>	<p>Webb Ellis flock 968 P E Goldsworthy MBE Grafham, Cambridgeshire 07711 416312 patrick@goldsworthy-uk.com</p>	<p>Breachwood Green flock 1204 Victoria Chamberlin Hitchin, Hertfordshire 07989 524885 victoria.chamberlin@jagriculture.com</p>
	<p>Sheepcote flock 1258 Ben Slack & Katy Gibson Ashbourne, Derbyshire ben.slack@benslack.co.uk</p>	

We have stock for sale and rams for hire, and are happy to talk to breeders who would like to know more about the merits of the traditional type of Southdown.

Low-cost, labour efficient enterprise is the driving force behind a successful business

Running a low-cost, labour efficient enterprise is the driving force behind lambing a 2000-ewe flock outdoors in Northumberland.

The Nelles family, of Thistleyhaugh Farm, Morpeth, have been lambing Lleyn ewes at grass since 1997; in 2017 they used Southdown tups for the first time to enable them to lamb ewe lambs outdoors too.

Two Southdown rams were purchased from Worcestershire Lleyn breeder Marcus Bullock and ewe lambs were tupped to lamb in May.

Duncan Nelles, who farms with his parents, Henry and Enid, and brother, Angus, was pleased with their performance.

Successful outdoor lambing

“It was an exceptionally hard winter, but the ewe lambs coped really well with lambing outdoors,” he says.

The key to outdoor lambing is to have a breed that can look after itself and can get on with the job without needing too much attention, Duncan suggests.

The Southdown lambs were vigorous with average 100-day weights of 27.2kg. “That is a good weight for a lamb out of a ewe lamb,” Duncan admits.

No concentrates are used in the system.

The Nelles family had been tenants of Thistlehaugh for three generations before they took advantage of an opportunity to buy the farm in 1996.

They are farming 550 hectares (1400 acres) of owned and rented land, running from the river Coquet with views to the Cheviot Hills on the Scottish border.

The land ranges in quality from good cultivated ground to Severely Disadvantaged Area land.

Organic management

In a bid to reduce input costs and maximise the value of grass, the family embarked on converting their system to organic in 2005.

They have since operated a strict grassland management programme with emphasis on red and white clover.



Duncan and Angus Nelles

In the last two decades, the business has doubled the area farmed and sheep numbers too, moving from a traditional 850-ewe Mule flock to pedigree Lleyns.

In addition to the sheep enterprise, the family also runs a 180-cow suckler herd, contract rears 1800 pigs, produces 7000 free range poultry and runs a farmhouse bed and breakfast business.

Since 2007 the entire sheep flock has been EID tagged and performance recorded with Signet.

EID and good grassland management have been instrumental in reducing lambing assistance, increasing maternal drive and reducing management issues.

The farm progeny tests rams for RamCompare, Signet’s genetic evaluation initiative.

Split flock

The Lleyn flock is split into A and B flocks to accelerate breed development. The A flock – around 75% of ewes – is mated with carefully selected Lleyn rams and while the commercial B flock is put to Signet performance recorded rams including Hampshire Down and Charollais sires.



Maternal traits are the main focus, including eight-week weights and maternal ability.

Tupping gets underway in the middle of October and the rams run with the ewes for six weeks. "We give ewes three weeks with the pure Lley ram, then we put in terminal sires for the second cycle," Duncan explains.

The ewes in the RamCompare project lamb from March 25th followed by the main flock on April 16th.

Target weaning age for lambs from the ewe lambs is 85 days, although lambs are sometimes sold straight off their mothers.

"We don't expect these lambs to move as quickly as the others because they have smaller birthweights," says Duncan.

Lambs are finished on red and white clover leys. The sheep flock follows the cattle in the rotation, so grazing is clean and in a fresh, vegetative growth phase.

A sward stick is used to measure clover and grass leys at least twice a month during the main growing season.

Top growth rates

To ensure there is no growth check from parasites, faecal egg counts are undertaken at least twice in each group, but worming is rarely needed due to the clean grazing policy.

In 2018, the Southdown lambs achieved average daily liveweight gains of 300g/day. Target age for slaughter was 115 days.

Weekly weighing from eight weeks means no lamb is ever kept longer than necessary.

Lambs are first drawn in late June and sold to Stephen Kirkup Livestock to supply Randall Parker

and to Dawn Meats at Carnaby, with 88% grading R or higher.

Outsourcing

This year the business has used a different approach to lambing their ewe lambs by outsourcing the job to another farmer. They will lamb on an organic holding in Aberdeenshire.

It is a system that is working well for both parties.

Ewe lambs were weighed before they left Thistleyhaugh and will remain on the other holding for 12 months.

The rearer will retain the lambs and the ewe lambs will be returned to Thistleyhaugh with the Nelles family paying an agreed fee for the total kilogrammes of liveweight gain.

It was a system Duncan saw in operation in New Zealand in 2011. "The rearer doesn't need to have capital tied up and doesn't need long term tenancies and the benefit for us is that we get the ewe lambs off the land which means there is more grass for the ewes, so theoretically they are more productive.

"There has to be an element of trust too."

As the flock is Maedi Visna accredited and organic, finding a suitable farm was a challenge.

Also, there can be challenges for the host farm, Duncan admits. "It is not an easy job lambing someone else's 500 ewe lambs."

As the ewe lambs were also tupped on this holding he didn't have the opportunity to use Southdown rams in 2018 but, with one of the rams still on the farm, 47 of the ewes are in lamb to a Southdown.

"We would definitely have used Southdown tups on the ewe lambs again this year, we couldn't fault their performance," says Duncan.

Blackfriar Southdowns

Established 2015 (flock no 1237) with foundation female bloodlines with New Zealand genetics from Southern Cross flock along with other select purchases



Sires currently being used:

Sarkosy (*Sire of the Female Breed Record*)

Ridings Magician (*Male Champion Lincolnshire Show 2018*)

French Import FR200221 40053 (*Sire of the Reserve Champion and top price at Melton Mowbray sale Sept 2018*)



Variety of stock for sale in 2019 including a superb selection of shearling rams and ewes sired by Sarkosy. Ewes with lambs and starter flocks.

Visitors welcome by appointment

Will Morton

44 Bobbin Lane, Lincoln, LN2 4ZB

07793977092

will_morton05@hotmail.com

2018 Worcester Premier Show and Sale

The Southdown Sheep Society Premier Sale took place at Worcester Market on 11th August with a top price of 920gns for the pre-sale champion, a shearling ram, from the East Dean flock of Messrs Humphrey, Chichester, West Sussex.

This son of Ridings Astronomer out of a home bred ewe was the championship pick of judge Roland Williams who gave him the male and overall championship and was later knocked down to Miss E M Elnaugh, Drinkstone, Suffolk.

Next best in the shearling ram offering was Cambridgeshire-based Patrick Goldsworthy's Webb Ellis Mas, which sold for 600gns to S A and P Welton, Carmarthenshire. This one, a son of Ridings Daniel out of a home bred dam, was the highest ranked Southdown so far recorded with an EBV of 349.

Just on his heels at 560gns was another from the East Dean flock and half-brother to the champion. This one was knocked down to Howard Wood, Gwent.

Leading female trade was a 2015-born ewe from the East Sussex-based Wakeham-Dawson and Harmer team at 500gns. This ET-bred female is by the French ram Benoit and is out of a home bred female. She sold to Messrs Sparke, Buckinghamshire.

Two females then sold at 460gns, the first of which

was the female and reserve overall champion, a shearling ewe from Lizzie Sargent's Offham flock, East Sussex. By a Ridings ram which was the 2016 National Show champion, this one is out of a Graywood female. She sold to K Wheeler, Herefordshire.

Next best was Carmarthenshire-based Edward Morgan selling a Chaileybrook-bred shearling ewe by Breton, a maternal brother to the 2018 National Show champion, Percheron. This one sold back to her breeders, the Long family, as a foundation female for Sophie Long's Littlebrook flock, Herefordshire.

It was a Percheron daughter from Jonathan Long's Chaileybrook flock that topped the ewe lamb offering at 340gns. This one sold to Joshua Jack for his Dovecote flock, Milton Keynes.

Leading ram lamb trade at 360gns was a Ridings sired lamb from the West Sussex-based Goodwood Estate pen. This one is out of a Southern Cross ewe and sold to Jim Cresswell for his Diss, Norfolk-based Wattisfield flock.

Averages:

9 senior ewes £200.08

24 shearling ewes £286.34

4 ewe lambs £262.50

4 senior rams £158.81

11 shearling rams £474.40

9 ram lambs £257.25



Judge J Roland Williams with Paul Humphrey and the show Champion



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2018 Melton Mowbray Show & Sale



Judge Stephen Humphrey with Nigel Barrington-Fuller and his show Champion

The second, and final, official Southdown Sheep Society sale took place at Melton Mowbray Market as part of the Traditional Native Breeds Show & Sale on Saturday September 8th, with the pre-sale show taking place the previous day.

Judge Stephen Humphrey from East Dean, West Sussex, selected a shearling ram as his show champion. This ram, de Pibrac 17/00231, bred by Nigel Barrington-Fuller from Essex and shown by Jim Cresswell, was sired by a Chaileybrook ram and out of a Goodwood ewe. In the sale the following day the champion was sold for 290gns to Mr J Gordon-Hall of Timberland, Lincoln.

Reserve Champion in the show went to Amy Readhead-Higgins' home bred ewe lamb, Sutherland April, 18/00361. This ewe lamb, by a French sire and out of a Beckbred ewe, was later knocked down to M Dickens and family from Milton Keynes, for 300gns.

Top price of the day was paid for a 2016 born ewe, Sutherland Rosie 16/00263 from Amy Readhead-Higgins. This ewe, sired by a French ram and out of a home-bred dam was sold to R Cox of Stoney

Stanton, Leicester, for 400gns. Not far behind this ewe was her stable-mate, another 2016 born Sutherland ewe, 16/00274, sired by the same French ram and out of a home-bred ewe. This ewe reached 300gns and headed home with her stable-mate to join the Port Hill flock of R Cox in Stoney Stanton.

Shearling ewes saw a brisk trade with quality animals selling well. Antony Graves' Brompton ewe 17/03930, sired by an Offham ram out of a home-bred ewe, was knocked down for 345gns to Peter and Ann-Mari Payne of South Mymms, Hertfordshire.

The first prize winner in the shearling ewe class in the pre-sale show sold for 340gns to Mrs Lorraine Clements for her Avenue Farm flock in Normanton-on-the-Wolds, Nottingham. From the Biscombe flock of Neil Stainthorpe, Biscombe 17/00241 was sired by an East Dean ram and out of a home-bred ewe.

Trade for the small number of ram lambs forward was consistent, with three ram lambs each finding new homes at 180gns apiece.

Averages

2 senior ewes 350gns

21 shearling ewes 237gns

8 ewe lambs 188gns

1 senior ram 190gns

3 shearling rams 293gns

3 ram lambs 180gns.



L to R: Amy-Readhead-Higgins with Reserve Champion Judge Stephen Humphrey, and Jim Cresswell exhibiting the Champion

Sutherland Southdowns

Flock No 896

Signet Recorded

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Left: Male and overall champion - Southdown Premier Breeders Show & Sale, Worcester. Centre and right: First prize pair of Southdown lambs and first and second prize pairs of native lamb carcasses - Royal Welsh Winter Fair.

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Webb Ellis

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Rudham

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Sutherland

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Ridings

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East Dean

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Southdowns achieve success at 2018 Winter Fairs

At Winter Fairs up and down the country the Southdowns left their mark, with breeders achieving success in all events at which the breed was represented.

The Royal Welsh Winter Fair saw an encouraging number of Southdowns entered and in both live and dead classes Southdowns were in the line-up of winning exhibits.

The Royal Welsh Winter Fair was a worthwhile trip for three major Sussex-based breeders. Stephen & Paul Humphrey's East Dean flock, from near Chichester, took the red rosette for their pair of Southdowns, and achieved similar success for their pair of lambs not containing any continental breeding. Messrs Wakeham-Dawson & Harmer from Lewes were awarded first place for their single Southdown lamb, with Nick Page and the



First prize pair of Southdown lambs bred and exhibited by D. S. & P. Humphrey at the 2018 Royal Welsh Winter Fair

Goodwood flock featuring in the winning line-up in all classes.

At the **Stafford Winter Fair** the Goodwood flock continued their successful run with a winning pair of lambs. In the pure-bred native lamb class it was long-standing Southdown breeder R O Cox of Stoney Stanton, Leics, who took the honours.

The **South East Primestock Winter Fair** saw local Sussex-based breeders in competition for the top places. The Ridings flock of Messrs Wakeham-Dawson & Harmer was successful in both the trimmed and untrimmed pairs classes, with Goodwood, D, S & P Humphrey and Charles Bull all standing in the winning line-up.

In the carcase competition it was a Southdown carcase exhibited by Mrs E Sargent that won the Reserve Supreme title.



First and second prize pairs of native carcasses bred and exhibited by D. S. & P. Humphrey at the 2018 Royal Welsh Winter Fair

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Suffolk – Interbreed group

Norfolk – Reserve Supreme

Kent – Reserve Supreme

Royal Welsh – Supreme Ewe Lamb

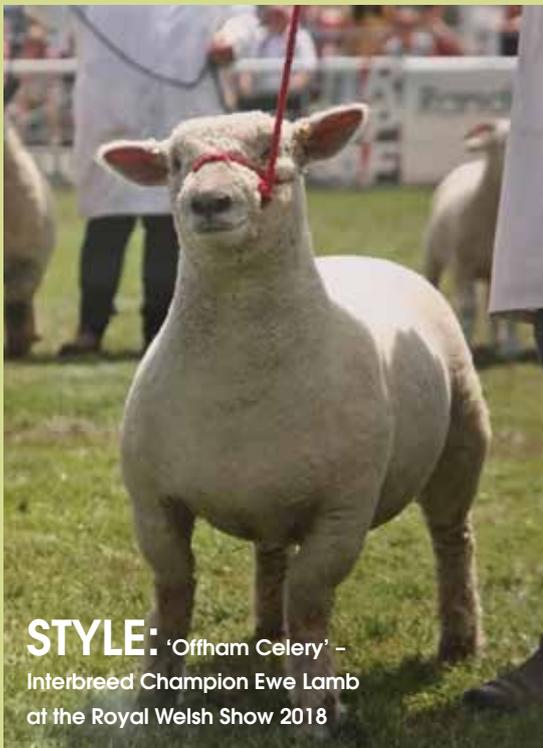
Edenbridge – Interbreed Pairs

Welsh Winter Fair – Champion Native Carcass

Southeast Prime Stock – Champion Native and Reserve Supreme Carcass

Ashford Fatstock Show – Champion Native Carcass and Live Native Lambs

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STYLE: 'Offham Celery' – Interbreed Champion Ewe Lamb at the Royal Welsh Show 2018



FEMININITY: 'Ridings Isabelle 10th' winning just one of her Supreme championships in 2018

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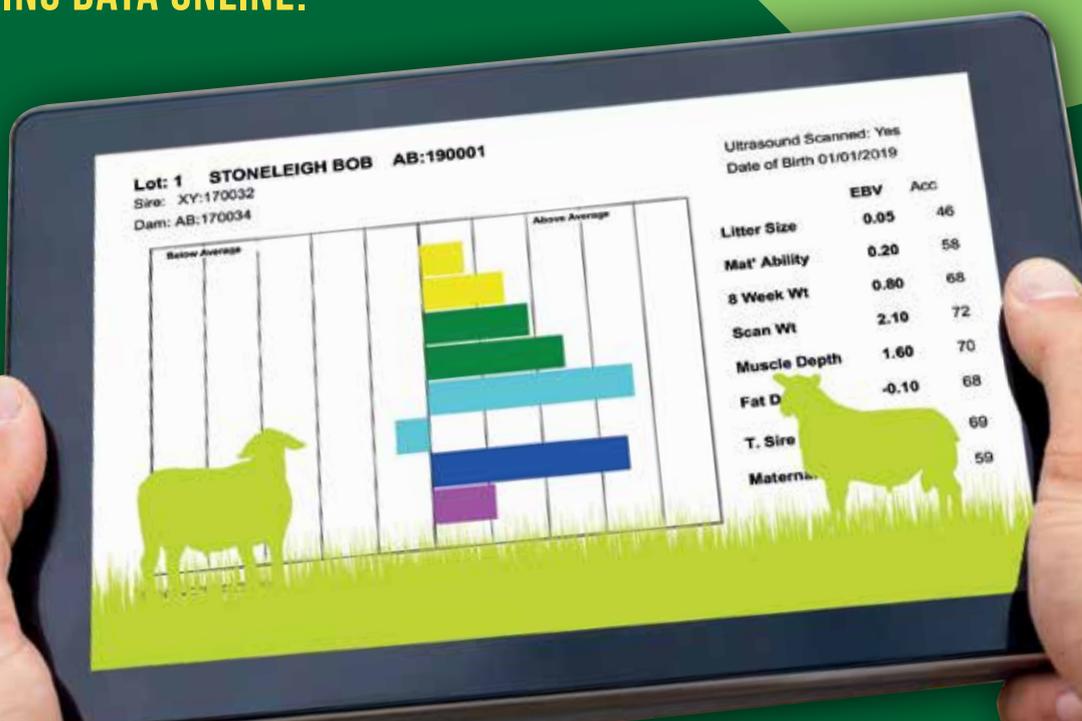
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Signet's new genetic analysis: The National Terminal Sire Evaluation

In 2019, Signet will relaunch the genetic evaluation service provided for terminal sire breeds.

The new service will deliver AHDB-funded research through a multi-breed evaluation, including new estimated breeding values (EBVs) and a major change to existing traits, expressing breeding values on a more commercially focused, weight-adjusted basis.

This exciting new approach will result in some of the biggest changes to Signet analyses in the last 20 years, with all breeding values being re-based for the first time since 1990.

What does this mean for Southdown breeders?

Updated EBVs - The biggest change within the new analysis will be to move all carcase traits from being age adjusted (current method) to weight adjusted. This means the updated EBVs will be a better prediction of carcase composition (muscling/fatness) at a fixed weight. As lambs are selected for slaughter based on a combination of weight and finish, rather than age, this will give a more commercial focus to carcase EBVs.

New traits - A new analysis gives the perfect opportunity to introduce new traits. From past and present CT images in breeds where lambs are regularly CT scanned, we have been able to calculate EBVs for:

- CT Eye muscle area
- Vertebrae number (thoracic, lumbar and total)
- Spine length (thoracic, lumbar and total)
- Intramuscular fat percentage (IMF%)

Other new traits will include:

- Birth weight
- Lambing ease
- Litter size reared

Re-basing - In 2019 all EBVs and Indexes will be re-based. Currently figures are shown relative to the average animal in 1990. The re-base will be set to 2010 meaning figures will be reported back to the average animal in 2010 which will have an EBV of 0 or an index of 100.

The re-based figures will mean a scan weight EBV of +4kg means an animal is 4kg heavier at scanning than the average animal in 2010.

Re-basing is an inevitable part of genetic evaluations and is crucial to keep the figures tangible. It also means that unknown animals/flocks will not start with EBVs as drastically low as they have previously.

New Indexes - Included breeds will now receive two indexes

- Terminal sire index – optimising growth, muscle depth and CT lean weight whilst holding the current levels of finish
- Maternal index – optimising prolificacy, maternal ability and early growth rate without increasing mature size or having a detrimental effect on muscling or lamb finish

Benchmark – the new Southdown benchmark can be seen below, new traits are included on a more detailed benchmark upon request:

RamCompare

RamCompare is a major industry sheep breeding initiative and the first commercial progeny test in the UK for terminal sire rams. In the first three seasons over 6,600 ewes were mated to 138 leading rams and updated results incorporating 2018 born lambs will be released in April 2019.

Southdown Breed Benchmark	Bottom 5%	Bottom 10%	Bottom 25%	Average	Top 25%	Top 10%	Top 5%
Maternal Ability EBV (kg)	-0.30	-0.18	0.03	0.26	0.49	0.70	0.82
Litter Size Born EBV (%)	-0.08	-0.06	-0.03	0.00	0.03	0.06	0.08
Eight Week Weight EBV (kg)	-0.27	0.04	0.56	1.13	1.70	2.22	2.53
Scan Weight EBV (kg)	-0.56	0.29	1.71	3.29	4.87	6.29	7.14
Muscle Depth EBV (mm)*	-0.80	-0.50	0.01	0.58	1.15	1.66	1.96
Fat Depth EBV (mm)*	-0.99	-0.85	-0.60	-0.32	-0.04	0.21	0.35
Lean Weight EBV (kg)*	-0.10	-0.06	0.01	0.08	0.15	0.22	0.26
Fat Weight EBV (kg)*	-0.72	-0.61	-0.44	-0.24	-0.04	0.13	0.24
Gigot Muscularity EBV (kg)*	-0.41	-0.32	-0.15	0.03	0.21	0.38	0.47
Mature Size EBV (Shearling Weight) (kg)	-1.08	-0.29	1.04	2.52	4.00	5.33	6.12
Terminal Sire Index	89	106	135	166	198	226	243
Maternal Index	81	96	120	147	174	199	213

Phase II of the project opened up nominations wider than the original five terminal sire breeds with 2018 born lambs being sired by a range of nine breeds. Nominations open on Monday 7th January 2019 and Southdown breeders can nominate their own rams/semen for selection. Closing 8th March, successful candidates will be confirmed in April. All performance recorded terminal sire breeds are eligible. Carcase and growth traits should be in the top 25 per cent of the breed.

How can I get involved?

2019 will prove to be the most exciting in Signets history with changes enhancing the service we can provide to performance recording clients. With change comes opportunity, and hence there has never been a better opportunity to get involved with the most proven method of improving flock genetics.

For more information on performance recording your Southdown flock please contact Emma Steele at emma.steele@ahdb.org.uk

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 488410
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Mrs Gail Sprake
Meens Farm
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For more details or to request a paper catalogue please contact the auctioneers or the Southdown Office.

*Catalogues will be available on line.
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